

MEMO

DATE: March 2, 2006

TO: Energy and Environment Committee (EEC)

FROM: Jessica Kirchner, Associate Regional Planner, (213)236-1983, kirchner@scag.ca.gov

SUBJECT: Urban Forestry and Air Quality

SUMMARY:

Dr. Jim Simpson of the Center for Urban Forest Research and John Melvin of the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection will give a presentation on using trees to improve air quality. This is in response to the Environmental Protection Agency's recent provisions to allow for the inclusion of urban trees in State Implementation Plans as a mechanism to improve air quality. According to the Urban Forestry Council website, urban forests improve air quality by reducing atmospheric carbon dioxide levels and absorbing air pollutants. Properly planted and managed trees can also reduce the need for heating and air conditioning, resulting in fewer emissions released into the atmosphere. A study of one Southwest region's six million trees reveals that the trees remove and store approximately 304,000 tons of atmospheric CO₂, 12,000 tons of ozone, and 9,000 tons of particulates. The purpose of the presentation is to learn more about how urban forests can be utilized in Southern California and options for improving air quality through tree planting.

BACKGROUND ATTACHMENT:

None.